



**Kurdish National Congress of North America**

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Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General  
United Nations  
1st Ave & E 44th St  
New York, NY 10017

November 12, 2009

Honorable Ban Ki-moon:

In the wake of the Sykes-Picot Treaty in 1918, and the subsequent division of Kurdistan among Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, the people of Kurdistan experienced the most unprecedented atrocities against them in the modern history. Each respective nation used all the means in its disposal to assimilate the Kurds into its own national melting pot. When the Kurds resisted the repressive policies and strived to protect their national identity they were physically and culturally subjected to the policy of annihilation. Three cultures have been imposed upon the Kurds and their native culture has become taboo for them to practice-punishable by imprisonment or death.

In Syria all Syrian citizens are Arabs. According to the Syrian Constitution, in Chapter 1 Basic Principles, Part 1 Political Principles, Article 1 [Arab Nation, Socialist Republic], section 2 reads, "The Syrian Arab region is a part of the Arab homeland," and section 3 states, "The people in the Syrian Arab region are a part of the Arab nation. They work and struggle to achieve the Arab nation's comprehensive unity." As a result of this racist Constitution, the Kurds in Syria have no identity of their own and are alluded to as "Unwanted Guests." For a Kurd in Syria to obtain Syrian citizenship he or she will have to give up his or her Kurdish identity, and register as an Arab in order to receive Syrian citizenship and be able to have an official employment. Part 3 of the Syrian Constitution [Educational and Cultural Principles] in Article 21 [Goals], reads, "The educational and cultural system aims at creating a socialist nationalist Arab generation... attached to its history and land, proud of its heritage, and filled with the spirit of struggle to achieve its nation's objectives of unity..." This piece of the Syrian Constitution leaves no doubt that Syria uses the education system to arabize the non-Arabs in Syria and instill into their minds the Ba'athist and pan-Arab ideologies. The Syrian government has a long history of using brutal measures to keep its people under control.

In the 1960s, the current Ba'ath regime, under the pretext of the "Arab Belt," internally displaced hundreds of thousands Kurds and distributed their ancestral lands amongst Arabs. This policy continued well into the 1980s. In the wake of such an arbitrary and inhumane policy, The Kurds are largely spread out and their national demographic cohesion has been weakened.

When Bashar al-Assad became the President in 2000, he gave hope for openness and more democratic practices within the Syrian government. However, his slogans were never implemented and have been a distant reality, especially toward the Kurds. As a matter of fact, under Bashar al-Assad, arbitrary arrests, torture, trials without lawyers, and liquidating of innocent Kurds have intensified. To date, thousands of innocent Kurds are in prisons in various areas in Syria without any substantiated charges against them.

The Kurds in Syria have been totally ignored by the outside world and are hardly mentioned as another ethnicity in Syria. The lack of interceding by the world powers, particularly the UN, has given liberty to the Syrian chauvinist government to continue its Arabization and cruel policies against the Kurds.

Therefore, it is justifiable to ask your Excellency to review the UN policies toward Syria and hold the Syrian government responsible for violating the most basic Kurdish human rights and encourage the Syrian authorities to amend their Constitution where Kurds and other non-Arabs in Syria are equal to Arabs before the law. Only then can social justice prevail and human dignity preserved, and only then can the Kurds enjoy their cultural and democratic rights in Syria.

Sincerely yours,  
Kirmanj Gundi  
President